

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7526

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, PO

SUBJECT: PRAVDA COMMENTARY ON PORTUGAL

1. SUMMARY: AN UNSIGNED, AUTHORITATIVE PRAVDA COMMENTARY
ON PORTUGAL FEBRUARY 22 ASSERTS STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE
ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT AND CONTINUED LEFT-WING UNITY IN THE
COUNTRY, AND CHASTIZES DUTCH, BRITISH, AND WEST GERMAN
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POLITICIANS FOR "MEDDLING" IN PORTUGAL'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

2. THE UNSIGNED COMMENTARY--FIRST OF ITS KIND SINCE THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT LAST APRIL-- THROWS MOSCOW'S SUPPORT STRONGLY BEHIND THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT (AFM) AND THE AFM'S COOPERATION WITH THE PORTUGUESE LEFT. AFTER CATALOGUING THREE ALLEGED ATTEMPTS TO PROVOKE A GOVERNMENTAL CRISIS--LAST SUMMER, LAST SEPTEMBER, AND JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1975--PRAVDA APPROVINGLY QUOTES COSTA GOMES TO THE EFFECT THAT THE STATE AUTHORITY WILL CONTINUE TO ACT COLLECTIVELY "WITH THE HELP OF COLLEGIAL ORGANIZATIONS" (A POSSIBLE REFERENCE TO THE COMMUNIST-BACKED AFM COORDINATION COMMITTEE). PRAVDA SAYS THAT THE STRENGTH OF DEMOCRACY IS IN THE UNITY OF ALL PROGRESSIVE FORCES AND THAT THIS UNITY IS VIOLATED WHEN PEOPLE ACT FROM A DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION AT THE EXPENSE OF THE COMMUNISTS, TO SPLIT THE LEFTISTS RANKS, AND TO PAVE THE WAY FOR REACTION AND FASCISM.

3. IN ITS CALL FOR LEFTIST UNITY, PRAVDA TREATS THE PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY GENTLY, SAYING ONLY THAT IT HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO PRESSURE FROM ABROAD TO CARRY ON AN ANTI-COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN. PRAVDA ALSO TAKES AN UPBEAT APPROACH TO THE APRIL 12 ELECTIONS, NOTING THAT THEY WILL LEAD TO THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION IN THE COUNTRY'S HISTORY.

4. PRAVDA'S CRITICISM IS LARGELY RESERVED FOR POLITICAL FIGURES FROM ABROAD, AND PARTICULARLY FOR WESTERN EUROPEAN POLITICIANS. IT NAMES DUTCH PARLIAMENTARIAN KRUIJZINGA (PHONETIC) AND FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER STOEL, AS WELL AS "ENGLISH LABOURITES" (CALLAGHAN'S VISIT IS NOT MENTIONED), AND "WEST GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS." THERE IS ALSO A MORE NORMAL ROASTING OF THE WESTERN PRESS (FOR ATTACKING THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY), OF "NATO MILITARY CIRCLES" (FOR FORMING A "STRANGE COALITION" WITH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TO SPLIT THE UNITY OF THE AFM AND THE PEOPLE), AND OF NATO NAVAL MANEUVERS (FOR THEIR "ACCIDENTAL" COINCIDENCE WITH THE INTERNAL STRUGGLE).

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5. PRAVDA GIVES ITS COMMENTARY AN ECONOMIC CONTEXT BY SAYING THAT, DESPITE IMPROVEMENTS, THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF PORTUGAL HAS HARDLY BEEN TOUCHED BY POLITICAL EVENTS OF THE LAST YEAR (I.E., IT IS STILL IN CAPITALIST HANDS). TO REALIZE THE ECONOMIC PROGRAM OF THE "DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT," SAYS PRAVDA, "WILL REQUIRE THE SOLIDARITY AND ACTIVIZATION OF ALL DEMOCRATIC FORCES"--ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING THAT MOSCOW CONTINUES TO BACK

THE AFM AND ITS COOPERATION WITH A UNITED LEFT.
STOESSEL

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